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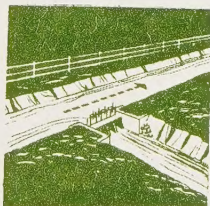


GENERAL PLAN for MERCED COUNTY

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MERCED COUNTY
GENERAL PLAN

- * THE GENERAL PLAN is the result of intensive investigation, study, analysis and decision by the County Planning Commission and Staff, and other groups of interested persons whose duty it is to recommend and adopt plans which determine the growth patterns of our County.
- * THE GENERAL PLAN is an assurance to the present residents of Merced County as well as to those of the future, of a continuing progressive planning program.
- * THE GENERAL PLAN is a living thing and not a rigid blueprint, and it is intended that it be maintained on a current basis as the county grows and develops.

When a County General Plan is adopted, each City Planning Commission and Legislative Body may consider the Objectives and Principles as an assurance that the planning actions will contribute toward a well balanced and acceptable pattern of development, and they in turn may adopt or use them as a foundation for their own Master Plans.

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This General Plan for Merced County has been prepared in compliance with the State of California Government Code on Conservation, Planning, and Zoning, Title 7., Article 7., Authority for and Scope of Master or General Plans, Sections 65460, 65461, and 65462 - (a), (b), (c), and (d).

This General Plan was certified to the Board of Supervisors by the Planning Commission by Resolution No. 272 on May 26, 1965, and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on June 22, 1965.

MERCED COUNTY
GENERAL PLAN

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

IT IS ASSUMED THAT:

- 1 - No major natural disaster, war, epidemic, or economic depression will befall our Nation, State, or County.
- 2 - Tremendous increases in population in our State and Nation can be expected, with the county population increasing to 162,659 in 1985.
- 3 - Absorption of developed areas into cities by annexation will continue, thereby causing the population of the unincorporated areas of the county to increase at a lesser rate each year.
- 4 - There will be an increase in the proportion of older people, workers over forty-five and those people seeking jobs under twenty-five; resulting in a considerable increase in demand for employment, housing, services, and schools, and that these demands will increase at a faster rate than will the population.
- 5 - Increased leisure time due to a shortening of the work week to possibly 35 hours will result in increased demands for additional cultural, educational, and recreational facilities.
- 6 - The need for more and better streets and highways will increase as automobiles increase in numbers and resulting in substantially more traveling by the public.
- 7 - Mass transit facilities will not be in need in the County by 1985.
- 8 - By 1985, due to the increasing needs for the flow of goods and through traffic movements, all of the freeways and expressways proposed in the California Freeway and Expressway System will be built or under construction.
- 9 - Improvements in air transport and surface vehicles and facilities will result in increased physical, social, and economic linkages between the County and other areas of our State and Nation.
- 10 - The Merced River Development Project, when completed, will both intensify and expand the County's agricultural operations and provide extensive water oriented recreational opportunities.
- 11 - The construction of the San Luis Reservoir and Forebay will result in a tremendous explosion of residential growth of the western portion of the County, expand the agricultural and agriculturally related industries and provide water oriented and other types of recreational opportunities that will be State wide in attraction.
- 12 - The agricultural industry will continue to play the major role in the County's economy.

GENERAL

OBJECTIVES

- 1 - To attain a regional pattern which may include a number of unincorporated urban centers, each with separate identity and each providing a range of living, working, shopping, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities for all, commensurate with its size, function, and location in relation to other areas.
- 2 - To achieve co-ordinated arrangement of land use and transportation facilities which will meet the range of social, economic, and cultural needs of the citizens.
- 3 - To co-ordinate planning matters of urban areas, cities, adjacent counties, and other levels of government concerned.
- 4 - To help create and maintain the best possible living environment for all residents.
- 5 - To help attain for all residents a variety of economic opportunities for employment and investment within the County and to protect these investments.

GENERAL

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - The use of vacant areas and the rebuilding of deteriorating areas within or near urban centers and adjacent to cities will be encouraged.
- 2 - Urban growth will be facilitated and guided contiguous to cities and urban centers and random skip and ribbon developments will be discouraged.
- 3 - All possible means will be used to assist urban areas in providing basic services such as storm drainage, sanitary sewage disposal systems and water systems.
- 4 - Each general type of land use area will be separated and so located in the Plan that it can develop to its logical limits without interference from incompatible uses.
- 5 - Cities adopted General Plans shall be given consideration in planning for the development of the surrounding unincorporated areas.

A FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

A sound foundation for the future of our County must be laid to insure orderly growth.

The planning function, in order to continue effectively, must observe the developed areas in their growth patterns, collect the observations regularly and weigh trends and potentials in the light of analysis of future influence on the area.

Upon this broad foundation can be built a framework for the future in which principles and objectives of the General Plan are the supporting members.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

OBJECTIVES

To attain for all residents a living environment which is safe, healthy, stable, and pleasant, and one which includes the desired cultural and educational, recreational and shopping facilities.

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - In order to efficiently correlate public investments in services and facilities with the needs of the residents, the Neighborhood Community structure will be used for planning residential areas. The principles of this structure are:
 - (a) The Neighborhood will be planned as a cohesive unit containing from 3,000 to 5,000 people and the density established will encourage a variety of housing while protecting public investments in services and facilities.
 - (b) Sites for Neighborhood Parks will be encouraged to combine with elementary schools wherever possible in order that the two can function as a neighborhood center for cultural, educational, and recreational activities.
 - (c) A Neighborhood Shopping Center will be encouraged of an extent and in a location that will adequately meet the needs of the residents of the neighborhood for convenience, goods, and services, and will be so designed as to enhance the living area.
 - (d) The Community, under this structure, would be a cohesive unit made up of from three to five neighborhoods.
 - (e) This Community would be served by a high school or a junior high school centrally and conveniently located. Wherever possible, this school will also be combined with a Community Park in order to more effectively serve as the Community center for persons of all ages.
 - (f) A Community Shopping Center will be encouraged in a central location to serve the residents of the Community.

AGRICULTURE

OBJECTIVE

To maintain and enhance the continued prosperity and growth of the agriculturally oriented segment of the County's economy.

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - The natural resources upon which agriculture is based will be protected, and the development of these resources will be encouraged.
- 2 - Agriculture will be retained in areas subject to periodic flooding, subsidence, or

where premature urbanization would be detrimental to the County's physical and economic well-being.

- 3 - Necessary expansions of urban centers will be directed towards the less productive lands where possible, and all urban development will be facilitated in a manner least disruptive to the agricultural surroundings.

RECREATION

OBJECTIVES

- 1 - To provide opportunities for a variety of recreational activities for residents of all age groups.
- 2 - To develop recreation as a major industry in the County.

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - Recreation areas will be encouraged in central locations to meet the varying needs of all age groups.
- 2 - Recreation uses in rural areas will be co-ordinated with agricultural land uses in order that possible conflicts between the two may be avoided.
- 3 - Development of the Merced River and the reservoirs to be formed by the Merced Irrigation Districts Merced River Project for all suitable types of recreational uses to meet the needs of local, regional, and statewide residents will be undertaken and encouraged.
- 4 - The development of major recreational facilities of statewide attraction at the San Luis Reservoir and Forebay, and along the California Aquaduct and Delta Mendota Canal will be undertaken and encouraged.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

OBJECTIVE

To provide commercial interests with opportunities to conduct businesses in a manner which is:

- (a) Convenient to the customer
- (b) In harmony with other land uses
- (c) Equitable to adjacent property owners
- (d) Not in conflict with circulation

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - The grouping of commercial uses within compact areas will be encouraged and facilitated.
- 2 - Provisions for new and expansions of existing commercial areas will be dependent

upon achieving a proper relation of each commercial area in size, location, types of activities, and accessibility with its respective trade area.

- 3 - Provision may be made for the following types of commercial uses in the urban areas, if the density of population should require it:
 - (a) Neighborhood Shopping Areas: providing convenience, goods and services for residents of a neighborhood.
 - (b) Community Shopping Areas: providing a fairly broad selection of goods and services for a community.
 - (c) Regional Shopping Area: providing the widest possible variety of selective shopping goods and services for the various County Planning Areas.
 - (d) Highway Service Areas: exclusively serving the travelers on Highways.
 - (e) General Retail and Service Areas: containing a variety of establishments requiring a generally convenient location, but not dependent upon pedestrian traffic for customers.
 - (f) Wholesale and Distributive Areas.
- 4 - The central business district of each urban center will be recognized as the dominant commercial center for the surrounding trade area.

INDUSTRY

OBJECTIVE

To assure ample opportunities for industrial development in an orderly manner.

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - A sufficient amount of industrial acreage will be provided for the needs of the anticipated population and for a choice of sites.
- 2 - Industrial areas will be encouraged in locations which are served by rail, highway, or air transportation.
- 3 - Industrial Parks, Light Industrial Areas, and Heavy Industrial Areas, will be encouraged only in locations where utilities are available or can be made available.
- 4 - Each Urban Center should have land available for sufficient industry to be financially sound and provide local employment opportunities and a broad economic base commensurate with its size and function.

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE

To permit broad range of opportunities for educational and cultural activities related to indi-

vidual service areas.

PRINCIPLES

- 1 - Provision may be made for educational and cultural facilities in urban and rural centers. The type, location, and size of each facility will be dependent upon the population and the characteristics of the area to be served.

POPULATION DENSITY

POPULATION DENSITY & BUILDING INTENSITY STANDARDS

In order to insure all residents who reside in the urban areas of the county with sufficient air space, building space, maximum space between adjacent neighboring dwellings, and space for outdoor family activities, the following population density and building intensity standards are recommended, based on a population factor of three and one-half (3-1/2) people per dwelling unit, and with an allowance of twenty-five percent (25%) for improvements for each acre of area:

POPULATION DENSITY AND BUILDING INTENSITY STANDARDS

<u>ZONE</u>	<u>MINIMUM AREA PER ONE DWELLING UNIT</u>	<u>MINIMUM LOT SIZE</u>	<u>MINIMUM ^{MAX.} NO. OF ONE FAM. DWELLINGS PER LOT</u>	<u>MINIMUM ^{MAX.} NO. OF ONE FAM. DWELLINGS PER ACRE</u>	<u>POPULATION PER LOT</u>	<u>POPULATION PER ACRE</u>
Agricultural- Residential	1/2 acre	1/2 acre	1	2	3.5	7.0
One-Family Residential	6,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	1	5	3.5	17.5
	*10,000 sq. ft.	*10,000 sq. ft.	1	3	3.5	10.5
Two-Family Residential	3,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	2	11	7.0	38.5
	*5,000 sq. ft.	*10,000 sq. ft.	2	7	7.0	24.5
Limited Multiple- Family Residential	2,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	3	16	10.5	56.0
Multiple-Family Residential	1,000 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	6	33	21.0	115.5

* - Where sewer and/or water facilities are developed on lot or parcel

FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH

Merced County's population growth for the decade from 1950 to 1960 was 29.6% as compared to the State average of 48.5%.

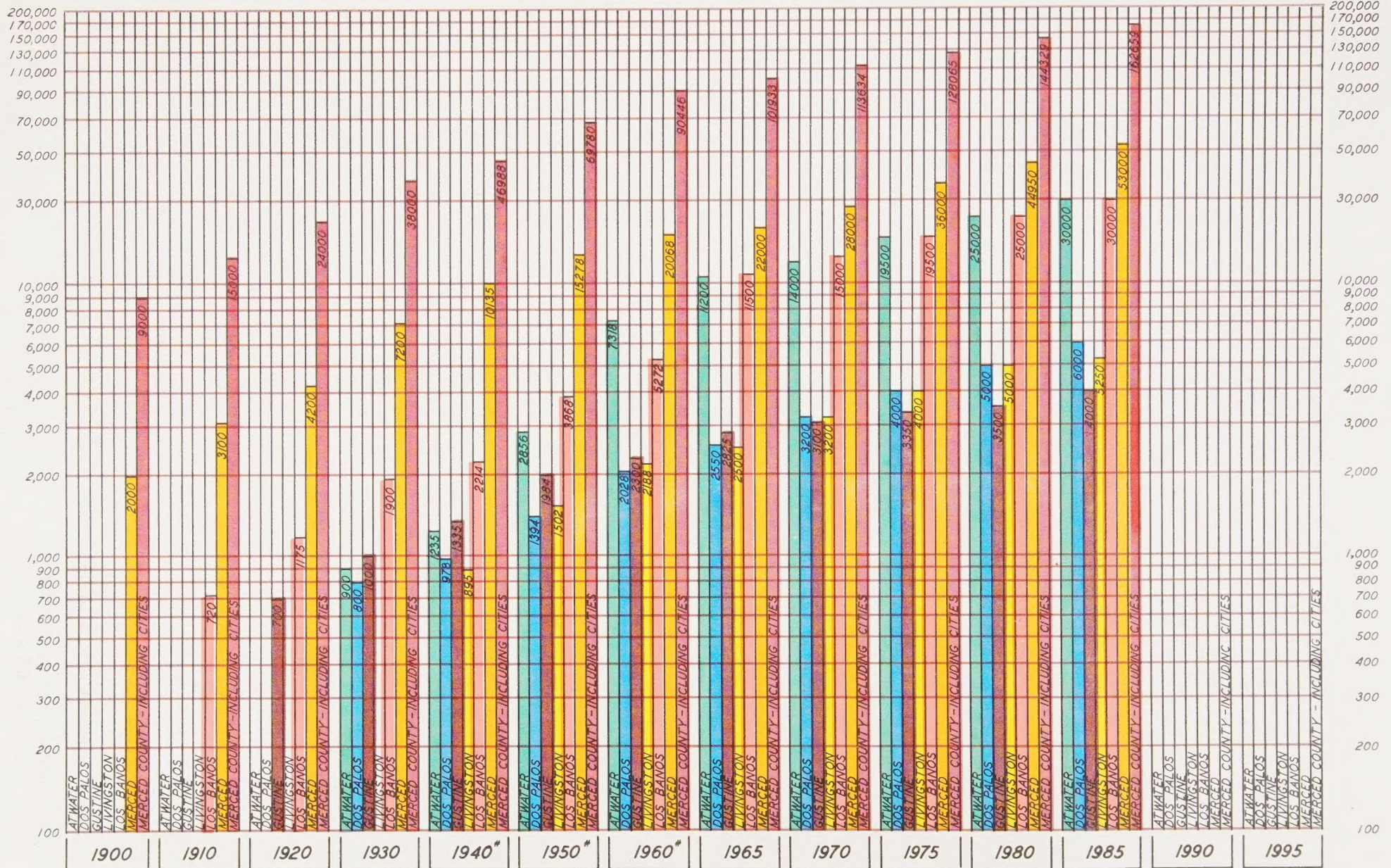
The county's population growth for the five-year period from 1960 to 1965 was 11.25%.

Projections show that the county's population growth for the decades from 1965 to 1975 will be 20.41%, and from 1975 to 1985 the growth is expected to be 21.27%.

The following population chart shows the county's and incorporated cities' population from the year 1900 to 1965 and projected to 1985.

MERCED COUNTY

POPULATION 1900-1965 AND FORECASTS TO 1985



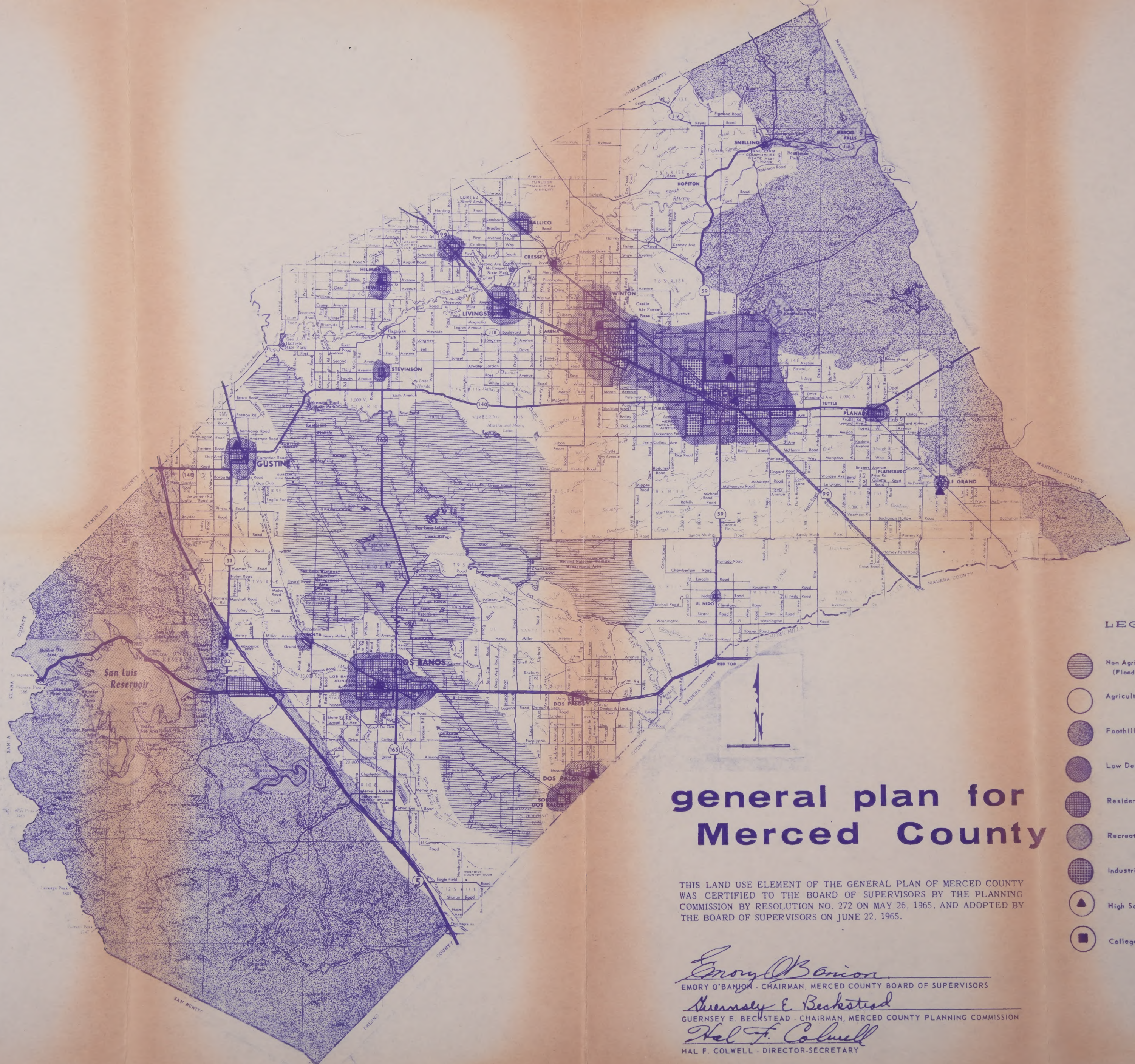
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LEGEND

- Non Agricultural (Flood Plain)
- Agricultural
- Foothill Pastures
- Low Density Residential
- Residential
- Recreational
- Industrial
- High Schools
- College

general plan for Merced County

THIS LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN OF MERCED COUNTY WAS CERTIFIED TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION BY RESOLUTION NO. 272 ON MAY 26, 1965, AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON JUNE 22, 1965.

Emory O'Banion
EMORY O'BANION - CHAIRMAN, MERCED COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Guernsey E. Beckstead
GUERNSEY E. BECKSTEAD - CHAIRMAN, MERCED COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Hal F. Colwell
HAL F. COLWELL - DIRECTOR-SECRETARY

